

VZCZCXRO9329
OO RUEHLH RUEHPW
DE RUEHIL #1905/01 1420739
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 210739Z MAY 08
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7013
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 8592
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 7934
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 3259
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 9737
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 5477
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 4219
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHWSMRC/USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 001905

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/16/2018

TAGS: [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PK](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN: ACTING CENTCOM COMMANDER MEETS WITH
DEFENSE SECRETARY KAMRAN RASOOL

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson, Reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: Acting USCENTCOM Commander, Lieutenant General Martin Dempsey visited Pakistan May 12. In his meeting with Secretary of Defense Kamran Rasool, Dempsey stressed the U.S.'s continued commitment to our long-term relationship with Pakistan and made assurances regarding continuity of effort during his tour as acting commander. Dempsey offered support to the new government's civilian leadership, but expressed concerns regarding Pakistan's counter-terrorism/counterinsurgency (CT/COIN) efforts in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Rasool shared his concerns, stating his belief that two strategies need more time and emphasis to work: winning of hearts and minds and political engagement by the new government. Rasool asserted that Pakistan must pursue increased political engagement and development to gain support of local communities while maintaining military pressure on extremist elements. Dempsey and Rasool both agreed to the need for greater transparency and understanding in order to effectively synchronize CT efforts. The meeting ended with Dempsey pledging his support and asking for Rasool's help to ensure those with knowledge of existing security issues would help "steer" the new civilian government in the right direction. End Summary

¶2. (C) LTG Dempsey, Major General Robert Allardice, CENTCOM Director of Strategy, Plans and Policy (J5), Henry Ensher, CENTCOM Political Advisor, and U.S. Defense Representative to Pakistan, Major General James R. Helmly met with Pakistan's Secretary of Defense, Kamran Rasool, at the Ministry of Defense on May 12. Dempsey began by explaining that his role as acting commander between ADM Fallon's resignation and GEN Petraeus' assumption is to ensure commitment to and continuity of existing CENTCOM efforts. He stressed that, although he has a solid grasp on the existing issues, he wanted to take the opportunity to ensure his perspectives were congruent with Pakistan's leadership. In particular, Dempsey said he was eager to understand the new government's perspective on how recent FATA agreements might play out internationally and how this might affect the ability to maintain commitments to shared CT objectives.

¶3. (C) Rasool responded that the GOP clearly recognizes the war on terror is Pakistan's war, adding two strategies must receive more emphasis for long-term success. The first, focused on "hearts and minds," seeks to match military efforts with development. Recognizing that the young and uneducated are susceptible to exploitation in the name of

religion, greater efforts in education and development are needed in the FATA to combat extremism. Second, Rasool pointed to the need for increased political engagement, accompanied by continued military pressure. He commented that following the elections, a previous strategy of "hit them hard" and then talk was no longer viable and must be replaced with coordinated political and military engagement to create "space for dialogue" by speaking from a "position of strength."

¶4. (C) Dempsey parried that while such strategies could indeed be very helpful, he wondered how Pakistan could positively engage reconcilable elements in the FATA while maintaining military pressure on those who are unequivocally "irreconcilable." Rasool replied that although the traditional strategy for the FATA has been to "marshal the strength of the tribes," they must now look to "sweeten the pot" with an increased emphasis on development. He raised the point that certain legislation within the U.S. could certainly help with such efforts, to which Dempsey replied, while he and Ambassador could work with the Congress to solve recent perturbations in U.S. funding to Pakistan, they must have mutual assurances that Pakistan will continue to keep pressure on the "irreconcilables." His concern was that without constant pressure on militant elements in the FATA, extremists could undermine any development efforts.

¶5. (C) Dempsey and Rasool then briefly discussed the importance of transparency and complete understanding with regard to both countries' roles and objectives in the FATA. Dempsey commented that many counter-terrorism efforts were

ISLAMABAD 00001905 002 OF 002

hindered by the ability of extremists to mask their activities as tribal ones. Rasool agreed there is difficulty in vetting intelligence regarding extremist activity because of the tendency for such activity to run congruent to legitimate tribal activities. They promised to work together and ensure constancy of purpose on both sides.

¶6. (C) Finally, Dempsey questioned Rasool regarding the ability to balance the threat in the FATA with that perceived from India. Rasool responded that while focus has shifted somewhat to the west and increased dialogue with India is promising, such dialogue is hampered by reluctance from both Pakistan and India to truly listen. While he believes the differences are reasonable and both sides are close to making meaningful headway on some significant issues, there is still a long way to go. Talks on trade and confidence building measures continue, but focus on such issues has been diverted by current problems within the new civilian government. Dempsey offered his support and asked for Rasool's assistance in making sure that those in leadership positions with a knowledge of the existing security issues help "steer" the new civilian government in the right direction.

¶7. (U) CENTCOM POLAD, Mr. Henry Ensher, has cleared this cable.
PATTERSON